



## **(Con)temporary commons in transition**

### **Local interventions, global ideas and current welfare discourses**

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## (Con)temporary commons in transition

### Local interventions, global ideas and current welfare discourses

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The role of the Nordic countries as a base for democratic and user-engaging design and planning is well-known, but also challenged. Current discourses on new layers of future welfare and explorative ways of thinking the collective are thus prominent, seeking to rethink 'the Danish tradition of focusing on the collective in urban development'.<sup>1</sup> These questions are raised parallel with the current need to transform many of the existing welfare and post-industrial structures in our cities and landscapes. How is this new Nordic (?) collective thinking expressed and tested - and how does this interact with the global flow of planning concepts (Healey 2013)? This contribution seeks to enter the discussion of the 'Nordic Encounters' by investigating user-engaging 'iterative place making' based on temporary and step-wise interventions, which are increasingly used to re-purpose areas undergoing transformation. These urban spaces of commonality (Ferguson 2014) often rooted in informality and expressed through 'micro-spatial urban practices' (Iveson 2013, p. 941) thereby enters official planning procedures, reflecting a kind of authorized informality (Tonkiss 2012). These engagements are expected to foster new social encounters: Local community engagement, public/semi-public commons and collectives and user-driven spaces are strongly promoted. This is visible in many Nordic re-development projects, but examples on re-development through experimental collaborative processes are global tendencies: Best-practice projects, but also more informal open sources and urban recipes travel across borders and contexts. What characterizes the way how these commons find form in a Nordic context?

The paper will explore the current discourse through analysing selected transformation projects in DK where exploring new collective formations are actively pursued physically and verbally as a main objective through collaborative practices and temporary landscapes. Through decoding of activities, spaces and discourses they will be related to concepts of collectivity and appropriation in the field of cultural planning in an international perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Fællesskaber i forandring: Tænk tanken Byen 2025', Ministeriet for By, Bolig og Landdistrikter, 2013, (Commons/Communities in change, The Think Tank City 2025, Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs)